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General Assembly
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Items 20 (b) and (d), 33, 46, 74 (b) and (e), 96, 97, 102, 108, 116, 165 and 166 of the provisional agenda*

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions; emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan

Culture of peace

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

General and complete disarmament: establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia; preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

Environment and sustainable development

Globalization and interdependence

International drug control

Human rights questions

Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

* A/55/150.

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Letter dated 11 July 2000 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit the text of the Dushanbe Declaration of the Heads of State of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan, signed on 5 July 2000 (see annex), as well as the text of the joint communiqué on the results of the meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan, held on 4 July 2000, within the framework of the meeting of the heads of State, "Shanghai Five" (see appendix).

We should be grateful if you would have this letter, its annex and appendix circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 20 (b) and (d), 33, 46, 74 (b) and (e), 96, 97, 102, 108, 116, 165 and 166 of the provisional agenda, as well as of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Wang** Yingfan
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the
People's Republic of China to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Madina B. **Jarbussynova**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Elmira **Ibraimova**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the
Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Sergey V. **Lavrov**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Rashid **Alimov**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations

Annex to the letter dated 11 July 2000 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Dushanbe Declaration of the Heads of State of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan

[Original: Chinese and Russian]

The People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan, hereinafter referred to as the Parties,

Convinced that the further development of cooperation and close interaction within the framework of the Shanghai Five on the basis of friendship and good-neighbourliness is in keeping with the basic interests of the peoples of the five countries and with current trends towards the establishment of a multipolar world and the creation of a new, just and rational international political and economic order;

Guided by the common desire of the five countries to maintain the relations of friendship that have been passed down from generation to generation, and to address all issues through consultation in a spirit of mutual understanding, equality and mutual advantage;

Affirming their commitment to the spirit and objectives of the documents signed at all meetings of the Five and to all the bilateral treaties and agreements concluded among them;

Having discussed, in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and constructiveness, questions of the status of and prospects for multilateral cooperation in areas of common interest,

Declare the following:

1. The Parties express their profound satisfaction at the development of relations among the States members of the Shanghai Five and consider that substantial results have been achieved in strengthening mutual trust and cooperation, and that the Five are playing an increasingly important and active role in maintaining security and stability in the region and are contributing to the joint development of the States members of the Five.

The Parties shall endeavour to transform the Shanghai Five into a regional structure for multilateral cooperation in various fields.

2. The Parties confirm their interest in making Central Asia a zone of peace and good-neighbourliness, stability and equitable international cooperation, and oppose any conflicts, threats or outside interference that might complicate the situation in the region. On that basis, and bearing in mind the geopolitical situation that is evolving in and around the region, the Parties are determined to deepen their interaction in the political, diplomatic, trade and economic, military, technical and other fields in order to strengthen regional security and stability.

3. The Parties note that the agreements concluded by the five countries on the issues of border settlement and conference-building in the military field embody a new concept of security based on mutual trust, equality and cooperation, further strengthen mutual understanding and good-neighbourliness and make a constructive contribution to ensuring stability on a broad regional basis.

They express their firm commitment to the rigorous implementation of all the provisions of the agreements between the five States on confidence-building in the military field and mutual reduction of armed forces in the border area, signed in Shanghai and Moscow in 1996 and 1997, respectively. The agreements established, for the first time, a zone of confidence and transparency, and predictability and the verifiability of military activity along the over 7,000-kilometre-long border zone.

The Parties note with satisfaction the successful start made by the Joint Monitoring Group of the Five in organizing and coordinating inspection work, and consider it essential to make use of the Group's potential also for the consideration of issues related to confidence-building in the military field. They are in favour of taking more active measures in that area, in particular by conducting joint exercises and training with a view to preventing hazardous military activity, exchanging experience gained from cooperation in peacekeeping operations and jointly holding conferences, seminars, symposia and sporting events.

4. The Parties consider that, in order to deepen mutual confidence and friendly cooperation among the five States in the military field and to consolidate their joint efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region, it is desirable to hold meetings of the Ministers of Defence and consultations among the defence structures of the States members of the Shanghai Five.

5. The Parties confirm their resolve jointly to combat international terrorism, religious extremism and national separatism, which are the main threat to regional security, stability and development, as well as criminal activity such as illicit trafficking in arms and narcotic drugs and illegal migration. To this end, the five States shall, in the near future, draw up an appropriate multilateral programme, conclude the requisite multilateral treaties and agreements on cooperation, hold regular meetings of the heads of the law-enforcement, border and customs agencies and special services of the five countries and, taking into consideration developments in the situation, conduct, within the framework of the Five, training in methods of combating terrorism and violence.

The Parties express their resolve to prevent the use of the territories of their States for the organization of activities that are detrimental to the sovereignty, security and public order of any of the five States.

The Parties express their satisfaction at the level of development of cooperation among the law-enforcement agencies and special services of the five countries within the framework of the Bishkek Group, support Kyrgyzstan's initiative to create a regional anti-terrorist structure with headquarters in Bishkek, and mandate the competent agencies of their own countries to begin negotiations with a view to preparing specific proposals and to continue consultations on this matter.

6. The Parties, firmly upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and also affirming the right of every State to choose its own path of political, economic and social development in accordance with its actual conditions,

are opposed to interference in the internal affairs of other States, including interference under the pretext of "humanitarian intervention" and "protection of human rights", and support each other's efforts to defend the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and social stability of the five States.

The Parties, affirming their commitment to the principle of respect for human rights, believe that, in the application of that principle, consideration must be given to the historically established characteristics of each State, and stress that the application of this principle must not conflict with other universally recognized principles of international law.

The Parties declare their support for the aspirations and efforts of the People's Republic of China to preserve the unity of the country in accordance with the "one China" principle.

The Parties express their support for the position of the Russian Federation concerning the resolution of the situation in the Chechen Republic.

7. The Parties, bearing in mind the political and other challenges facing the modern world, including attempts to alter the established practice for resolving international and regional problems, emphasize that they will steadfastly promote the strengthening of the role of the United Nations as the sole universal mechanism for maintaining international peace and stability. They are opposed to any use or threat of military force in international relations that is not sanctioned by the Security Council, as well as attempts by any State or group of States, acting in its own interests, to monopolize decision-making on global and regional issues.

8. The Parties emphasize the absolute necessity of maintaining and strictly complying with the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, which prohibits the creation by individual countries of anti-missile systems to defend their territories. That Treaty is a cornerstone of strategic stability and constitutes the basis for the further reduction of strategic offensive weapons.

The Parties consider that the deployment of closed bloc-based anti-ballistic missile defence systems in the theatre of operations in the Asia and Pacific region may upset stability and security in the region and bring about an escalation of the arms race, and express their support for the position of China, which opposes plans to include Taiwan in the anti-ballistic missile defence system in the theatre of operations by any State in whatever form.

9. The Parties declare that, having stood the test of time, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the thirtieth anniversary of which is being observed this year, has proved to be an effective instrument for curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and has reduced the risk of a nuclear conflict, and are in favour of making the Treaty truly universal in scope.

10. The Parties support the initiative of Uzbekistan on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Central Asian region and consider that a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone must comply with the established principles and parameters for such instruments.

11. The Parties express their deep concern at the continuing military and political confrontation in Afghanistan, which poses a serious threat to regional and international security.

The Parties support the efforts of the United Nations and its leading role in achieving a political settlement of the Afghan conflict, and call on all the opposing forces to show restraint and to return in the near future to peaceful negotiations, taking into account the interests of all groups and strata of Afghan society.

12. The Parties welcome the conclusion of the process of peaceful settlement and the establishment of national concord in Tajikistan, support the policy adopted by the leaders of Tajikistan to address the tasks of post-conflict reconstruction and economic recovery and to develop democratic institutions and carry out economic and social reforms, and call upon the international community to provide the necessary support for the development of Tajikistan.

13. The Parties consider the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia as a positive process on the Asian continent which, together with the existing structures and mechanisms in Asia, provide further opportunities for political dialogue on issues of regional security, confidence-building and the development of multilateral cooperation.

14. The Parties, on the basis of the principles of equality and mutually advantageous cooperation, will use every means to encourage the establishment and development of a trade and economic partnership within the framework of the Five, including matters relating to the improvement of the investment climate and the business environment in their countries, the granting of favourable terms for the conduct of normal business activities by citizens and enterprises of the other countries of the Five and the settlement of disputes that arise in the course of their cooperation.

The Parties consider that the implementation of Kazakhstan's initiative to hold a meeting of the heads of Government of the five countries is fully in keeping with those objectives, and they support the establishment, as necessary, by the appropriate authorities of the five States, of joint expert groups to carry out the necessary preparatory work.

The Parties support the interest of the People's Republic of China in the active participation of the Russian Federation and the Central Asian countries in the development of China's western regions.

The Parties consider that the effective utilization of the energy potential of the countries of the Shanghai Five and the strengthening of regional cooperation in the field of energy on the basis of mutual advantage are an important factor in ensuring stability and development in the region and will enable all the States of the Shanghai Five to achieve a new level of multilateral cooperation.

15. The Parties shall encourage the development of cooperation among the member countries of the Five in the field of culture, including the joint organization of various festivals, exhibitions and tours, and consider it desirable to hold meetings, at an appropriate time, of the Ministers of Culture of the member countries of the Five.

16. The Parties are strongly committed to the protection of the environment, including the utilization of water resources in the region, and will cooperate in this field on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

17. The Parties attach great importance to the development of cooperation among the foreign policy organs of the States of the Five and consider it desirable to hold

annual meetings of Ministers for Foreign Affairs to consider the development of cooperation among the five countries in all fields and to discuss international and regional problems and develop joint approaches to them.

18. In order to strengthen the coordinating principle and increase efficiency in the study of questions relating to cooperation within the framework of the Five, the Parties shall provide every kind of assistance to the national coordinators appointed in each country of the Five, and support the establishment of the Council of National Coordinators and the adoption of an appropriate five-party regulatory instrument aimed at improving the effectiveness of the Council's work.

19. The Parties confirm that the interaction among the five countries is not directed against other States and is open in nature. They welcome the participation, at the inter-State and other levels, of other interested countries in specific cooperation programmes and projects of the Five.

20. Mr. Jiang Zemin, President of China, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbaev, President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Askar Akayev, President of Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation and Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, President of Tajikistan, welcome the participation in the summit of the Shanghai Five of Mr. Islam Karimov, President of Uzbekistan.

(*Signed*) **Jiang** Zemin
President of the People's Republic of China

(*Signed*) N. A. **Nazarbaev**
President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

(*Signed*) A. A. **Akayev**
President of the Kyrgyz Republic

(*Signed*) V. V. **Putin**
President of the Russian Federation

(*Signed*) E. S. **Rakhmonov**
President of the Republic of Tajikistan

Dushanbe, 5 July 2000

Appendix to the letter dated 11 July 2000 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint Communiqué on the results of the meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan

[Original: Chinese and Russian]

The first meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan was held on 4 July 2000 in Dushanbe in the context of the meeting of heads of State of the Shanghai Five.

The meeting took place in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and constructiveness.

The Ministers considered the progress achieved in developing interaction among the States of the Shanghai Five since the Bishkek Summit, held in August 1999, and noted with satisfaction the greater degree of mutual trust in the military field in the border areas of the countries of the Five, the consistent settlement of border issues inherited from the past, the deepening of cooperation in the political field and the sphere of security, the broadening of mutual understanding in regional and international matters, and the further development of trade and mutually advantageous economic cooperation.

The establishment and development of mechanisms within the framework of the Shanghai Five reflect the wish of the peoples of the five States always to maintain with each other relations of good-neighbourliness, partnership and friendship and embody a new kind of international relations — transcending blocs, open, not directed against third States and based on equitable cooperation, mutual trust and mutual advantage. This is enriching current diplomatic practice and regional cooperation, playing an important role in maintaining security and stability in the region and contributing to the development in the world of the trend towards multipolarity and the establishment of a just and rational international order.

The Ministers noted that these elements are reflected in the summit's draft final document, the Dushanbe Declaration which, at the same time, is oriented towards the further strengthening and development of interaction and sets out specific tasks in that area and practical ways of implementing them.

The Ministers consider that, in order to enhance the effectiveness of meetings of the leaders of the countries of the Shanghai Five and the coordination of cooperation on international and regional matters, it is necessary to continue to expand such cooperation and improve mechanisms for interaction within the framework of the Shanghai Five.

To this end, the Ministers agreed to hold meetings at least once a year alternately in each of the five States in order to conduct exchanges of views on pressing issues relating to the situation in the world and the region, and to hold

consultations of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries of the Five on subjects of common interest.

The Ministers approved the establishment of the Council of National Coordinators to consider questions relating to cooperation within the framework of the Shanghai Five. The Council will operate on the basis of the regulations that it will draw up and approve. The Ministers expressed support for conferring on the Council, in due course, the prerogatives of a working body of the Shanghai Five, following the conclusion for that purpose of an appropriate agreement among the five countries.

The Ministers believe that the development of economic cooperation among the five States is not only a necessary response on their part to the situation that is evolving as a result of economic globalization but also a key element in strengthening regional security and stability and an important factor in accelerating the economic and social development of their States. The ministries of foreign affairs of the five States will provide every kind of assistance and create favourable conditions for the strengthening of multilateral and bilateral trade and economic cooperation among the countries of the Five.

The Ministers welcome the final settlement of the border issues between China and Kazakhstan and China and Kyrgyzstan. They note that China and the Russian Federation and China and Tajikistan will continue negotiations, based on the treaties relating to the present border, in accordance with the generally accepted norms of international law, through consultations conducted on the basis of equality, and in a spirit of mutual understanding and reciprocal concessions with a view to achieving a speedy and comprehensive settlement of outstanding border issues. They expressed confidence that the world's longest peaceful land border, the border between China and Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan, would become a zone of friendship, closely linking the peoples of those countries.

The Ministers, deeply concerned at the rise of international terrorism, religious extremism and national separatism, believe that these forces are the main threat to security and stability in the region, and consider it essential to strengthen cooperation in this area, both on a bilateral basis and through multilateral cooperation, including the signing by the States of the Five of appropriate treaties and agreements.

The Ministers value highly the contribution of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the preservation of stability in Central Asia and confirm their support for the initiatives and efforts by those countries to strengthen regional and global security, including the efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone and to reinforce confidence-building in Asia. The Ministers oppose activities by any external forces that might complicate or aggravate the situation in the region.

The Ministers welcome the successful completion of an inter-Tajik settlement and the establishment of national accord in Tajikistan and support the efforts of the Government and people of Tajikistan to protect its State independence and sovereignty and ensure the steady development of the national economy in the post-conflict period.

The Ministers express concern at signs of an increase in hegemonism and the use of force to resolve conflict situations, at the outbreak of local wars and regional conflicts and at the mounting challenges facing humanity.

The Ministers emphasize that, in the current situation, strict compliance with the fundamental purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law and the international community's adherence to the five principles of peaceful coexistence are an important basis for the maintenance of peace and stability throughout the world and the realization of universal development and human well-being. The Ministers note that the Russian Federation and China, as permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations, play an important role in maintaining peace and security throughout the world.

The Ministers consider that, despite the current difficulties, the world is continuing to develop towards multipolarity. The countries of the Five will strengthen interaction on questions of strategy in international affairs and will oppose any form of "neo-interventionism". The Ministers express their determination to oppose any attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States using human rights or humanitarian concerns as pretexts, and underscore that the issue of the universality of human rights must be seen in the context of the actual conditions in the regions or countries concerned.

The Ministers confirm their support for General Assembly resolution 54/54 A of 1999, entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems", emphasize that this Treaty requires comprehensive and strict compliance, and oppose any attempts to violate the Treaty. The parties note that the development by closed bloc-based anti-ballistic missile systems in the theatre of operations in the Asia and Pacific region is undermining peace and stability in the region.

The Ministers express concern at the situation in Afghanistan and call upon the belligerent parties, in the best interests of the people and the State, to sit down at the negotiating table, at the earliest opportunity, with a view to achieving national reconciliation. They oppose the use of Afghanistan and its territory by any external forces to carry out activities that pose a threat to security in the region.

The Ministers declare their support for the positions of principle of China on the issue of Taiwan, and of the Russian Federation on the resolution of the situation in the Chechen Republic.

The Ministers note that interaction within the framework of the Shanghai Five transcends blocs, is neither isolationist nor directed against third countries and makes a substantial contribution to protecting security and stability in the region.

The Ministers welcomed the participation in the Dushanbe meeting of a representative from Uzbekistan.

(*Signed*) **Tang** Jiaxuan
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

(*Signed*) E. A. **Idrissov**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

(*Signed*) M.I. **Imanaliev**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan

(*Signed*) I. S. **Ivanov**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

(*Signed*) T. N. **Nazarov**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan

Dushanbe, 4 July 2000

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Fifty-fifth session
Items 119 and 123 of the preliminary list*

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Pattern of conferences

Remote interpretation

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted in response to requests made by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/248 of 23 December 1999, the Committee on Conferences[1] and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.[2] It covers developments in the field of remote interpretation following the circulation of the report prepared in 1999 (A/54/176).

2. The 1999 report was considered by the Committee on Conferences in August 1999. During its consideration, the view was expressed that the report should be considered to be preliminary. Emphasis was placed on the need to involve interpreters in the development of the new system, as the physical and psychological well-being of interpreters was directly related to their performance on the job. The Committee adopted a conclusion in which it "commended the efforts of the Secretariat to develop a system of remote interpretation and looked forward to additional experiments in the future. The Committee requested the Secretariat to further refine the cost considerations of remote interpretation, taking into account not only technological possibilities but also the cost benefits of remote interpretation, including the relative cost advantages of the different conference centres that were likely providers of remote interpretation services, and to report thereon."[3]

3. Later, the General Assembly also considered the question on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General and the report of the Committee on Conferences. On 23 December 1999, the Assembly adopted resolution 54/248, in which it decided that in the absence of an Assembly decision to the contrary, the use of remote interpretation should not constitute an alternative to the current institutionalized system of interpretation and that the use of remote interpretation should not affect the quality of interpretation or in itself lead to any further reduction in language posts, nor would it affect the equal treatment of the six official languages. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to keep under review the introduction and use of any new technology, in particular remote interpretation, and to report thereon to the Assembly on a regular basis.

4. All activities already undertaken or foreseen are in agreement with the framework established by the General Assembly. Nothing is done during the experiments that could jeopardize the ability to provide total-quality services equally in all six languages. Only communications systems capable of transmitting high-quality sound and image are used. Cost implications of remote interpretation would be determined based on

* A/55/50.

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the use of such high-quality communications. Furthermore, there is no linkage between remote interpretation and the number of language posts. Any possible financial advantage of remote interpretation will probably be connected with economies in travel and subsistence allowance costs. Likewise, the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005[4] views remote interpretation as a complement, rather than as an alternative, to on-site services.

5. In the 1999 report of the Secretary-General, it had been announced that an experiment involving the servicing from Geneva of a full-scale intergovernmental meeting, with six languages, to be held at Nairobi, would take place as early as possible in 2000. The selection of the duty stations involved in the experiment was based on the availability of interpretation staff and vacant conference rooms equipped with interpretation booths at Geneva, as well as the possibility of enhancing the use of existing meeting facilities at Nairobi, where no permanent interpreters were posted.

6. The Geneva-Nairobi experiment was intended to build on the results achieved by the Vienna-Geneva experiment and to gather missing information on relevant technical, financial and human resources issues. To actually accomplish this, the experiment had to be conducted under conditions as identical as possible to those prevailing during a typical session of an intergovernmental body. It also had to provide data on the sustainability of remote interpretation over several consecutive days, both in technical and in human resources terms.

7. Pursuant to the consideration of the meetings programme for 2000 at Nairobi, which included only a few weeks of meetings with interpretation in six languages, as well as the substantive and organizational characteristics of different sessions, their political sensitivity and the views of substantive secretariats, it was decided that the first substantive session of the Commission on Human Settlements acting as the Preparatory Committee for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, to be held from 8 to12 May 2000, would be selected for the experiment.

8. While the Vienna-Geneva test had been conducted using integrated services digital network (ISDN) lines for the transmission of both sound and image, the Geneva-Nairobi experiment would require the use of satellite services to emulate ISDN lines, which are not available in Kenya. In order to determine accurately the relevant technical requirements, including equipment, and agree on organizational arrangements, a survey of the facilities and services available at Nairobi was conducted by three staff members from the United Nations Office at Geneva and the United Nations Office at Vienna who had been instrumental in organizing the 1999 Vienna-Geneva experiment. They visited the United Nations Office at Nairobi from 10 to 13 January 2000.

9. They concluded that remote interpretation from Geneva for a Nairobi meeting would be possible if adequate telecommunications infrastructure emulating ISDN lines was available. The Mercure satellite connection between Nairobi and Leuk, in Switzerland, made available to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) by the European Space Agency (ESA), offered the best alternative, but it needed to be upgraded with additional bandwidth to ensure sound and image transmissions of sufficient quality for interpretation purposes, without disrupting other existing services. The additional capacity could be leased from commercial satellite services. Other improvements in telephone lines at both ends and purchases or rental of videoconference and communications equipment were also necessary. In addition, some components used in the Vienna-Geneva experiment would have to be shipped on loan from Vienna to Nairobi.

10. The total cost of the necessary telecommunications upgrades and equipment was estimated at about $290,000. The experiment would have also required the customary assignment to the United Nations Office at Nairobi of a full team of interpreters in order to have the necessary back-up in case of disruptions in the communications or malfunctioning of the equipment. An important cost component was accounted for by six modems which, it was hoped, could be provided on loan by ESA, since they were assumed to be readily available to ESA. Contrary to original assumptions, the Electronic Services Division at the United Nations Office at Geneva determined that there would not be an opportunity to use any component of the equipment to be bought for the experiment in communications projects of a different nature. After repeated attempts, it also proved impossible to secure the loan of the six

modems, whose cost would have amounted to $120,000.

11. Before implementing other steps and making financial commitments, it was necessary to ascertain that the telecommunications set-up being considered would interface properly with the interpretation system at Nairobi. A connectivity test using equipment available at Vienna was scheduled for the last week in January. Delays in shipping and the need to use additional materials not available locally made it necessary to reschedule the test, which was conducted on 10 March with positive results.

12. At that stage, it was no longer viable to purchase the modems that ESA had been expected to lend, since delivery time, according to the suppliers, was in the order of three months. The only alternative was to reconfigure the Mercure network links at Arendal (Norway), Leuk and Nairobi, as a one-time arrangement. This would still need considerable lead time.

13. By 14 March, it was concluded that making substantial financial commitments and embarking on further technical and staffing preparations were not prudent. If there was a slippage of just a few days in any activity, as had happened with the connectivity tests, considerable resources would have been spent and the technical set-up would not have been in place for the experiment to take place between 8 and 12 May. With no other meeting at Nairobi suitable for the experiment coming up, preparations were suspended.

14. In a related development, in December 1999, the General Assembly decided that a full-fledged interpretation service should be established at Nairobi by 1 January 2001. This decision has changed drastically one of the basic considerations that had led to the design of the cancelled experiment, namely, the relative availability of interpreters in different conference centres. In view of the likely schedule of meetings at each location, if an experiment involving Nairobi is to be conducted in the future, it should perhaps consist in servicing from Nairobi a meeting held at either Geneva or Vienna. Consideration will be given to setting up an experiment at a time when a full team of interpreters is available at Nairobi.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/54/32), paras. 53 and 61.

[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 7* (A/54/7), chap. II, para. I.34.

[3] Ibid., *Supplement No. 32* (A/54/32), para. 61.

[4] A/55/6 (Prog. 6), para. 6.19.

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Item 118 of the provisional agenda*
Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Review and assessment of the asbestos problem at the United Nations and management of asbestos-containing materials at overseas buildings at Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and at the locations of the regional commissions

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/249, the Secretary-General submitted a report on the review assessment and management of the asbestos problem at United Nations Headquarters (A/54/779), including specific proposals in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 aimed at addressing the situation. That report was reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, which recommended that the General Assembly take note of the information concerning Headquarters and that similar information be provided for overseas properties (see A/54/7/Add.12, para. 8). In a draft decision (see A/54/691/Add.1) approved on 7 April 2000, the Fifth Committee endorsed the recommendation.

The Secretary-General is pleased to submit the present report, which provides an assessment of the existing conditions with regard to asbestos-containing materials at United Nations buildings located in Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and at regional commission buildings in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut and Santiago. The report includes a review of measures and procedures being followed to avoid any harmful effects of such materials on the health of staff members, delegates and other persons working in and visiting the buildings.

* A/55/150.

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I. Introduction

1. By resolution 54/249, the Secretary-General was requested to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session a detailed and comprehensive report addressing the asbestos problem at United Nations Headquarters buildings.

2. In his report on the review assessment and management of the asbestos problem at United Nations Headquarters (A/54/779), the Secretary-General provided a review of measures and procedures being followed in order to ensure that the presence of such materials has no negative effect on the health of delegates, staff members or other persons working in and visiting the buildings, including specific proposals to address the situation in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

3. The report also contained general and historical information on asbestos, the use of asbestos-containing materials, studies conducted on the adverse health effects associated with exposure to asbestos, industry codes, regulations and standards and the handling of asbestos-containing materials.

4. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), during its consideration of the report, met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information. The Committee recommended in document A/54/7/Add.12, paragraph 8, that the General Assembly take note of the information for Headquarters and that similar information be provided for buildings at Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and at the locations of the regional commissions.

5. The present report provides an assessment of the asbestos situation at those locations. The glossary of terms and general background information regarding the hazards of asbestos-containing materials contained in the annex to the above-mentioned report (A/54/779) remain applicable to the present report and are reproduced in the annex.

II. United Nations Office at Geneva

A. Presence of asbestos

6. Very limited amounts of asbestos-containing materials were used in the construction of the Palais des Nations at Geneva, as noted below.

1. Old buildings

7. In the old buildings constructed by the League of Nations between 1931 and 1938, asbestos-containing materials were used in the Assembly Hall and adjoining room XVI for acoustical and fireproofing purposes. Spray-on vermiculite and a mix of magnesium-iron/calcium silicates was used in 1938 and again in 1960 at:

(a) The four rounded corners of the Assembly Hall, decorated with very large mural paintings (approximately 11 metres high and 7 metres wide). These paintings were attached to concave perforated sheets on which a large amount of soft asbestos-containing material had been applied. Those mural paintings were removed in 1960 and were replaced by large wall hangings;

(b) Part of the ceiling (vaulted section) had been sprayed with vermiculite which contains asbestos material.

2. New building (E Wing)

8. In the new building, constructed between 1968 and 1973, part of the metal structure of the conference building was sprayed with a fireproofing material, vermiante, which contains small amounts of asbestos material. The metal framework is concealed behind a drop-down ceiling made of fibrous plaster.

3. Pavillions du Petit Saconnex

9. These prefabricated buildings were tested in 1997 and were found to have no asbestos-containing materials.

B. Compliance with industry codes, regulations and standards

10. The buildings at the United Nations Office at Geneva fully comply with all standards, codes and

regulations and guidelines of the host country, Switzerland, specialized laboratories and competent authorities, such as:

(a) Regulation No. 6503, edition 1.91 (July 1994), of the Commision fédérale de coordination pour la sécurite au travail;

(b) Institut universitaire romand de santé au travail, Lausanne;

(c) Société et laboratoire d'études, maintenance et d'expertises, Geneva.

11. Any operations for the monitoring, removal and disposal of asbestos-containing materials are performed in complete compliance with the above regulations and standards, including engaging of contractors to perform such work. All air quality monitoring, removal and disposal work is performed by certified contractors. The in-house staff supervises outside contractors and participates in maintenance and custodial activities during which employees may contact but not disturb asbestos-containing materials.

Threshold values

12. According to current official regulations in Switzerland, airborne fibres must be below a count of 700 fibres per cubic metre for safe and healthy occupancy. An airborne fibre count between 700 and 1,200 per cubic metre requires further purification and filtration and regular inspections. Recorded airborne fibre counts above 1,200 per cubic metre require additional technical and purification measures to bring the fibre count below the threshold values.

C. Current measures

13. *Assembly Hall.* During the complete renovation of the Assembly Hall during 1994-1995, full asbestos removal was carried out in the Hall and in the adjoining room, room XVI, because of the links between the Hall and room XVI through the air conditioning ducts.

14. *New building (E Wing).* Since 1995, measures have been taken to remove asbestos containing materials from the conference rooms and hallways (Spence hallways on the first, second and third floors) of this building. For example, prior to replacing light fixtures in the drop-down ceiling in room XVII, complete removal of asbestos-containing materials was carried out from the metal beams, which were sprayed with new fireproofing material that did not contain any asbestos.

15. A small amount of vermiante still remains in some beams in rooms XVIII, XIX and XX in inaccessible areas. This material in the concealed areas is fully encapsulated and hardened and cannot become airborne; hence, it poses no risk to the occupants of those spaces.

16. Air quality testing in the old and new buildings have confirmed a fibre count between 100 to 550 fibres per cubic metre, which is well below the safe threshold limit of 700 fibres per cubic metre.

D. Resources required for the management of asbestos

17. During 1995-2000, all asbestos-containing materials from the Assembly Hall and adjacent room in the old buildings and from various conference rooms and hallways of the new building (E Wing) were removed. There is still some remaining fireproofing asbestos-containing material, vermiante, in some concealed surfaces of the rooms XVIII, XIX and XX of the new building. But this material is in fully encapsulated condition and poses no risk to occupants. Removal of this material from concealed surfaces would require approximately $1 million and each of those rooms would need to be closed down for four to six months each. Removal of the material in concealed locations and in an encapsulated state is not recommended by the experts. Therefore, no additional resources are required for the management of asbestos at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

E. Conclusion

18. Asbestos-containing materials were used only in limited quantities in buildings for the United Nations Office at Geneva, as acoustical and fireproofing material. Almost all the asbestos-containing materials have been removed from the old and new buildings, except for small amounts of fireproofing material on the metal beams in rooms XVIII, XIX and XX of the new building, which is fully encapsulated and poses no risk to the occupants. Air quality tests have confirmed the fibre count well below the safe threshold limits. No additional funds or resources are required for the

management of the asbestos problem at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

III. United Nations Office at Vienna

A. Presence of asbestos

19. Asbestos-containing materials were widely used in the steel structure ceilings, walls, partitions and other areas of the United Nations Office at Vienna buildings as acoustic, fireproofing and insulation covering. Use of such materials was permitted in Austria up until 1979. Since all buildings were constructed prior to 1979, there were no restrictions governing the use of asbestos-containing materials during the design and construction phase. The asbestos used mostly is a mix of white asbestos (chrysotile — magnesium silicate hydrate), blue asbestos (crocidolite — sodium iron silicate) and green asbestos (anthrophylite and tremolite — magnesium-iron/calcium silicate).

B. Compliance with industry codes, regulations and standards

20. All buildings at the Vienna International Centre are owned by the Austrian Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other government agencies have been primarily responsible for monitoring, removal and disposal of any asbestos-containing materials. Even though restrictions governing the use of asbestos in Austria were first introduced in 1979, the first general prohibition of the use of asbestos was legislated in 1990.

21. Two independent consulting companies, one Austrian and one British, have surveyed the buildings and have established threshold values for safe airborne levels of asbestos fibres consistent with other European countries. These values should be below a count of 700-fibres per cubic metre.

22. Any operations for the monitoring, removal and disposal of asbestos-containing materials are performed in accordance with the guidelines of the consultants engaged by the Austrian Government.

C. Current measures

23. Many years before 1990, the Buildings Management Service at the United Nations Office at Vienna started a programme of regular inspections and encapsulation of asbestos surfaces so as to prevent asbestos fibres becoming air borne. Periodic monitoring of air quality has confirmed the fibre count to be well below the safe threshold value in all buildings at the United Nations Office at Vienna. In cases where ceiling tiles need to be removed for cabling or other maintenance and renovation activities, there exists a potential for fibre counts to exceed the safe threshold values. Therefore, all such work is performed only after hours and during weekends, when all office work surfaces are properly covered and all workers use proper protective and respiratory equipment. Since 100 per cent fresh air is used and the inside air is not recirculated in the Vienna International Centre, any free fibres are exhausted to the outside. In certain offices and other areas where air is recirculated, indoor air quality tests are used to ensure that fibre counts are always below the safe threshold values. There are no known cases of asbestos-related diseases for the staff, delegates or visitors to the Centre.

D. Resources required and programme for the management of asbestos

24. Regular inspections and encapsulation efforts are ongoing. Any work to be performed above the ceilings is performed with proper protection and monitoring and only after hours and on weekends.

25. Initial efforts for the removal of asbestos were undertaken by the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in 1996, followed by a Buildings Management Service-initiated evaluation in 1997 of the asbestos situation. The resulting proposals for removal of asbestos were found to be too general to serve as the basis for a systematic plan for action.

26. In 1999, the government agency responsible for the Vienna International Centre initiated a comprehensive study of the asbestos situation that could be used as the basis to develop a master plan for the removal of asbestos in the Centre. The study undertook a comprehensive asbestos removal pilot project during fall and winter 1999. The pilot project was several times more expensive and lasted three

times longer than originally planned. A detailed report describing the results of the pilot project and lessons learned was released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 26 April 1999. The study recommended that:

(a) Asbestos be removed from all floors, with three to five floors of office space being vacated at a time and cleared of all asbestos-containing materials. During abatement, all of the occupied areas should have zero asbestos fibre count;

(b) The report estimated that eight years of work would be required to remove all asbestos from office areas and 20 years of work to remove asbestos from other areas;

(c) The total cost of removal is estimated at 450 million Austrian schillings (approximately US$ 32 million). During such an extended period, other logistical and operating problems could surface that could further escalate costs;

(d) Meetings are taking place between the Vienna-based organizations and the host country to discuss alternative logistic solutions, such as the number of floors to be vacated simultaneously, relocation arrangements etc.;

(e) The Vienna-based organizations have submitted a position paper to the host country stating that the host country should cover all removal costs, including direct costs, such as labour, and indirect costs, such as relocation expenses. The host government negotiators have not yet accepted the position paper;

(f) Since the host country does not want to incur the expenses associated with staff relocations to office areas outside of the Vienna International Centre, in the latest proposal Austria's negotiators have suggested the establishment of a container-based swing space office area to house staff during the asbestos-removal project. Discussions are taking place about the suitability of the proposal itself, the technical realization of the proposal without impeding operations or causing significant indirect costs and the minimization of the total project duration.

E. Conclusion

27. Asbestos-containing materials were used extensively in the United Nations Office at Vienna as acoustical, fireproofing and insulating materials. All asbestos-containing surfaces are regularly inspected and maintained in an encapsulated state, whereby asbestos fibres cannot become airborne. Any maintenance or renovation work where asbestos could be disturbed is performed after hours and during weekends. All indoor air quality tests have revealed the fibre counts well below the safe threshold limits. A long-term master plan is under development, and associated processes and costs are under discussions between the United Nations and the Austrian Government.

IV. United Nations Office at Nairobi

28. The buildings at the United Nations Office at Nairobi complex, which were constructed between 1975 and 1994, do not contain any asbestos material since they were constructed when the use of such materials was already discouraged. Since there is no asbestos problem at this complex, no further information on this location is included in the present report.

V. Economic Commission for Africa headquarters

A. Presence of asbestos

29. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) headquarters at Addis Ababa, which was constructed between 1961 and 1976, used ACM (rock wool), a material containing asbestos on a relatively small scale, on the following surfaces:

(a) Acoustic insulation over ceiling panels;

(b) Thermal insulation on pipes and ducts or electrical insulation over some terminals;

(c) Acoustic isolation between metal panels for partition walls.

30. To date, no tests have been performed to determine the type of asbestos-containing materials at ECA. However, a programme of bulk samples testing to determine the extent of the asbestos problem is being developed in coordination with United Nations Headquarters for use commencing in the year 2001 and thereafter.

31. The new conference facilities, pavilions and auxiliary buildings, which were constructed in 1996, do not contain any asbestos material.

B. Compliance with industry codes, regulations and standards

32. No regulations issued by the local authorities regarding asbestos monitoring, control, testing, removal and disposal were found. Therefore, guidelines for the above areas would be developed and used for ECA offices in coordination with United Nations Headquarters along the lines of codes, standards and guidelines used in the United States and Europe.

C. Current measures

33. Currently only regular visual inspections of areas known to have asbestos-containing materials are carried out and all asbestos-containing materials are maintained in an encapsulated state by the use of a gypsum/latex sealant. All buildings maintenance manuals have been modified to include weekly inspection of insulation on all pipes and ducts, ceiling and panels. Immediate encapsulation of any disturbed/damaged asbestos material is performed. For maintenance and renovation projects, special personal safety measures are followed to avoid any adverse health effects. Use of any asbestos-containing materials is prohibited. There have been no indoor air quality tests performed to date to determine indoor airborne fibre counts. However, a programme of regular indoor air quality testing with regard to fibre count is being developed in coordination with United Nations Headquarters for use commencing in the year 2001 and thereafter.

D. Resources required and programme for management of asbestos

34. To date, there has not been any need for removal and disposal of asbestos-containing materials and hence no resources have been requested. However, ECA will implement a monitoring, testing and engineering controls programme in the year 2001 in coordination with United Nations Headquarters that may lead to additional resources being required for management of the asbestos situation at ECA headquarters.

E. Conclusion

35. All asbestos-containing materials at ECA headquarters are maintained in an encapsulated condition and as a result no health or safety problem has been experienced to date. Additional tests and engineering controls will be developed and implemented in 2001 to ensure safety of the staff, delegates and visitors.

VI. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean headquarters

A. Presence of asbestos

36. The original infrastructure of the buildings at Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) headquarters, which were constructed between 1966 and 1992, used asbestos-containing materials on the following surfaces:

(a) Thermal insulation on water piping (which was completely replaced 15 years ago);

(b) Acoustic filler in the wall partitions.

37. No asbestos-containing materials were used in the building additions or alterations/improvements after 1992.

B. Compliance with industry codes, regulations and standards

38. ECLAC buildings comply with all applicable local codes, regulations and standards with regard to monitoring, removal and disposal of asbestos-containing materials. Such rules and regulations are identical to those used in the United States.

C. Current measures

39. All asbestos-containing insulation from water pipes was removed 15 years ago. Testing has confirmed the presence of asbestos. The following measures have

been implemented to protect the United Nations staff, delegates and visitors from exposure to asbestos fibres:

(a) For any alteration or improvement project, if an existing partitioned space is affected, the partitions with asbestos-containing materials are removed and replaced with partitions free of asbestos;

(b) During the 2000-2001 biennium, it is planned to replace all existing asbestos-containing partitions with partitions free of asbestos;

(c) At the completion of the above project, there will no longer be any asbestos-containing materials at ECLAC headquarters;

(d) To date, no adverse health effects or contamination from asbestos materials in the wall partitions have occurred. This is because any work related to replacement of existing partitions is done under controlled conditions.

D. Resources required and programme for the management of asbestos

40. Approximately $250,000 was budgeted in the 2000-2001 biennium for the replacement of all existing asbestos-containing wall partitions with new asbestos-free wall partitions. At the completion of this project, there will no longer be any asbestos-containing materials at ECLAC headquarters and hence no additional resources will be required.

E. Conclusion

41. ECLAC headquarters had asbestos materials present in the insulation on water pipes and as acoustic filler in wall partitions. Asbestos materials were removed from piping 15 years ago. All wall partitions containing asbestos are planned to be replaced during the 2000-2001 biennium. Thereafter, ECLAC buildings will be free of any asbestos materials. To date, no harmful health effects have been experienced since any partition replacement work is performed with proper protective engineering control measures.

VII. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific headquarters

A. Presence of asbestos

42. The ESCAP complex consists of three structures, namely:

(a) A United Nations conference centre;

(b) The secretariat building;

(c) The service building.

43. The United Nations conference centre, constructed between 1989 and 1993, did not use any asbestos-containing materials for the buildings, infrastructure and fixtures.

44. The secretariat and service buildings are structures totalling 50,159 square metres (m^2) in floor area, and were constructed between 1973 and 1975. Detailed review of those structures has confirmed that all areas of those buildings are free of asbestos-containing materials except for approximately 35,000 m^2 of vinyl composition floor tiles that used white asbestos, chrysotile (magnesium silicate hydrate) as a binding material.

45. Any asbestos-binding material used for vinyl floor tiles is considered non-friable and fully encapsulated, and does not become airborne during normal use or cleaning operations. Therefore, such floor tiles do not pose any health and safety risks to the staff, delegates and visitors to the complex.

B. Compliance with industry codes, regulations and standards

46. ESCAP facilities fully comply with local and international standards with regard to asbestos-containing materials. Since the asbestos used as a binding material in vinyl tiles is considered fully encapsulated and non-friable, the rules and regulations do not require removal of such tiles except when they become damaged or a renovation of the affected area is undertaken.

C. Current measures

47. ESCAP has been systematically replacing the asbestos-containing vinyl floor tiles since 1991 with a similar product that contains no asbestos. The replacement is done in conjunction with other alterations, improvements or maintenance work. To date, there has been no incidence of asbestos fibres becoming airborne since any tile replacement work is performed under a proper protective and controlled environment.

D. Resources required for the management of asbestos

48. ESCAP plans to replace all remaining asbestos-containing vinyl tiles in a phased manner over a six-year period, commencing in the 2002-2003 biennium, even though they pose no health risk to the building occupants. The total cost of replacement of the above tiles is estimated at $400,000, which would be spread over the six years. ESCAP will request appropriate funding for this project over the period 2002-2007. After completion of the above vinyl floor tiles replacement project, ESCAP facilities will be free of asbestos-containing materials.

E. Conclusion

49. The ESCAP conference centre has no asbestos-containing materials in its buildings, infrastructure or equipment. The ESCAP secretariat and service buildings only contain asbestos as a binding material over 35,000 m^2 of floor that is fully encapsulated, non-friable and poses no health risk to their occupants. It is planned to replace all asbestos-containing floor tiles over a six-year period, commencing in 2002.

VIII. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia headquarters

50. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) headquarters complex, including facilities for United Nations agencies and other international organizations, which is leased at no charge, was constructed in 1997, as a "smart" building. The internal and external finishings of the building do not contain any asbestos material since it was constructed when use of such materials was already discouraged. Lined vinyl partition walls contain rock wool insulation only, which does not contain any asbestos material. Since there is no asbestos problem in this complex, no further information on this location is included in the present report.

IX. Overall conclusions regarding the management of asbestos-containing materials at United Nations Headquarters, the United Nations Offices at Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi, and the headquarters of the regional commissions

51. The United Nations Office at Nairobi and ESCWA headquarters in Beirut have no asbestos-containing materials in their buildings, infrastructure elements and equipment, and hence no further action is required at those locations.

52. Asbestos was used to different degrees in buildings at United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna, and at ECA headquarters in Addis Ababa, ECLAC headquarters in Santiago and ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok.

53. For all the facilities noted in the above paragraph, applicable regulations of the host country are followed with regard to monitoring, engineering controls, removal and disposal of asbestos-containing materials.

54. The emphasis at all these facilities has been to conduct regular inspections, testing and indoor air quality monitoring to ensure that all asbestos-containing materials remain encapsulated and do not become friable, and that the fibre count in the air remains well below industry-established safe threshold limits. Adequate engineering control measures are in place to make sure that the safety and health of the staff, delegates and visitors are not adversely affected by the presence of asbestos-containing materials. In addition, any asbestos-containing material that can become friable by maintenance, alterations, improvement or other activities is either removed or encapsulated by following established safety, monitoring and control measures.

55. There have been no known or documented cases of asbestos contamination or known adverse health effects from the release of asbestos fibres.

56. All facilities have developed or are developing a programme of phased removal of asbestos-containing materials over a multi-year period, consistent with safety, operations, space availability and budgetary considerations.

57. The programme of engineering controls and resources required for the abatement of asbestos-containing materials for United Nations Headquarters is detailed in document A/54/779, while the programme for the overseas properties is summarized herein.

Annex

Glossary

Asbestos. Generic name for a class of naturally occurring magnesium-silicate minerals that found wide acceptance as a choice material for high durability, insulating, fire-resistance and sound-proofing properties.

White asbestos. Chrysotile (magnesium silicate hydrate); 95 per cent of all asbestos used in the United States.

Brown asbestos. Amosite (ferrous magnesium silicate); used in places in the United States and in United Nations Headquarters buildings for its high heat resistance.

Blue asbestos. Crocidolite (sodium iron silicate); used mostly in Europe.

Green asbestos. Anthophyllite and tremolite (magnesium-iron/calcium silicate); used mostly in Europe.

Asbestos-containing materials. Any material containing more than 1 per cent of asbestos.

Asbestos fibre. A particle form of asbestos 5 micrometres long or longer, with the length of the particle being three or more times that of the diameter.

Critical barrier. One or more layers of plastic sealed over all openings into a work area or any other similarly placed physical barrier sufficient to prevent airborne asbestos in a work area from migrating to an adjacent area.

Employee notification of monitoring results. Notification of results to affected employees is required within 15 days of receipt of results.

Encapsulated, or non-friable asbestos. The state of asbestos-containing materials when they are properly sealed, wrapped and contained so that they do not crumble by hand pressure and do not pose any risk of releasing asbestos fibres into the air during the normal course of daily activities or during routine servicing, custodial and cleaning activities. Encapsulated materials do not pose a health risk unless disturbed by cutting, sanding or handling processes.

Engineering controls and work practices. Isolation, ventilation, cleaning and other measures to ensure that airborne asbestos fibres always remain within the permissible exposure limits or excursion limits before, during or after any asbestos handling, disposal, abatement or cleaning activities.

Excursion limit. An airborne concentration of asbestos of 1.0 fibre per cubic centimetre of air (1 f/cc), as averaged over a sampling period of thirty (30) minutes.

Exposure monitoring. General determination of employee exposure shall be made from breathing zone air samples that are representative of a 30-minute short-term or 8-hour time-weighted average.

Friable asbestos. Asbestos that can be crumbled with hand pressure and can therefore readily release fibres into the air, if disturbed. The potential for an asbestos-containing material to release harmful, breathable fibres into the air depends on its existing degree of friability or the friability created by any cutting or handling process.

High-efficiency particulate air filter. Filters capable of trapping 99.97 percent of particles 0.3 micrometres in diameter.

Permissible exposure limits. Airborne concentration of asbestos fibres in excess of 0.1 fibre per cubic centimetre of air as an 8-hour time-weighted average.

Presumed asbestos-containing materials. Thermal insulation or surfacing material found in buildings constructed before 1980. Unless otherwise proven by tests, such insulation or surfacing materials are presumed to contain asbestos. Buildings constructed in the United States after 1980 did not use asbestos-containing materials.

Regulated area. An area where abatement of asbestos-containing materials is planned.

Surfacing asbestos-containing materials. Surfacing materials that are sprayed on, trowelled on or otherwise applied to walls, ceilings or other surfaces for fireproofing, acoustic treatment and other purposes and which contain more than 1 per cent asbestos.

Thermal system insulation asbestos-containing materials. Thermal system insulation materials that contain more than 1 per cent asbestos and are applied to pipes, fittings, tanks, ducts or other components to prevent heat loss or gain.

United Nations A/55/136

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General Assembly
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Item 61 (b) of the provisional agenda*
United Nations reform: measures and proposals:
The Millennium Assembly of the United Nations

Letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of an appeal adopted on 28 June 2000 by the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, addressed to the parliamentarians of the world (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, under item 61 (b) of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Madina B. **Dzharbusynova**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations

* A/55/150.

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Annex to the letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The twenty-first century: century of peace and morality

Distinguished parliamentarians of the world,

Humankind, having followed the centuries-old path of its development to the threshold of the new twenty-first century, is now seeking to understand the past and, gazing far into the future, is reflecting, willy-nilly, on where the energy, thoughts and strength of the human intellect should be directed.

The passing twentieth century has entered human history as the era of the attainment of the newest technologies, the development of outer space and, at the same time, of interactive spiritual progress. And however paradoxical it may be, it is this century that has left in people's memory the horrors of genocide, hunger and global ecological catastrophe. Two world wars, with their irremediable human and material losses, also fell to its lot. The consequences of the atomic bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and of the Chernobyl nuclear accident will never fade from human consciousness. To us, the people of Kazakhstan, who have survived more than one nuclear test on the Semipalatinsk and other ranges and the consequences of the disappearance of the Aral Sea, the pain of humankind is close at hand and understandable.

By declaring itself a non-nuclear State, Kazakhstan took an important step in the cause of strengthening peace on Earth. Having transformed itself from a country of nomads into a developed country with the Baikonur cosmodrome, it is striving in every way to use its capacities in the interest of universal well-being. But peace and tranquillity on Earth are attained through sustained effort on the part of all. On this path, we must draw the correct conclusions from past mistakes and always remember that our fate is in our hands. Universal human values are inherent in us, as in all of you, regardless of different nations, genders, races, origins and creeds. The philosophy of spiritual culture always proclaimed: Do not stray from the path of truth, do no harm, develop and flourish, improve yourself, using the potential of accumulated reason only for the good of humankind.

Distinguished parliamentarians, only by uniting our efforts will we pave the way to the strengthening of peace, confidence and moral health and the flourishing of every country's economy, and avoid nuclear and ecological catastrophe.

We call upon all of you to direct your general law-making activity towards serving the high ideals of humankind. Let us leave as the legacy of the future generation a peaceful, creative Mother Earth.

We, the members of Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, sincerely hope for a full understanding of our noble aspirations. We are convinced that the assembly of world parliamentarians will also support this appeal.

May the twenty-first century be the century of peace and morality.

Appeal adopted at the joint meeting of the Chambers of
Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Astan, 27 June 2000

United Nations A/55/137–E/2000/95

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Item 20 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2000
New York, 5 July-1 August 2000
Agenda item 9**
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/55/150.
** E/2000/100.

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I. Introduction

1. This report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/116 of 15 December 1999 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its fifty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution. The present report covers the period from May 1999 to May 2000, and provides an analysis of the current status of development and of development assistance in the occupied Palestinian territory. It presents a more detailed account of the development process in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the United Nations role within it, than previous reports on the subject. It is hoped that the report will assist the international community in providing an effective response to the real needs of the people in the occupied Palestinian territory. This is particularly important given that potential political developments in the coming year will require extensive attention and support in order to foster progress and stability in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the region. A separate report, prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/55/84), which has been submitted to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, provides detailed information on the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

2. In September 1999, the Secretary-General reconfigured the mandate of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, whose title was changed to United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority. In addition to his responsibilities relating to the occupied Palestinian territory, the Special Coordinator now also has responsibilities for coordinating United Nations development assistance related to the peace process in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. A principal challenge for the United Nations system in this period is to underpin current peace talks and efforts to advance the political process, with programmes and projects that will lead to long-term and sustainable development. The Special Coordinator is leading United Nations development efforts that are especially relevant to the peace process including anticipating and strengthening, as appropriate, the foundations for growth of development cooperation.

3. Throughout the period under review, the Special Coordinator has maintained his efforts to fulfil the mandate of his office, including ensuring better coordination between the relevant institutions of the Palestinian Authority and United Nations agencies, as well as the donor community, and monitoring and documenting economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory. He has also provided periodic analyses on these matters and special reports on specific issues relevant to the development effort, such as the constraints on and the prospects for growth of the private sector. The sixth annual United Nations inter-agency meeting, which was convened at the headquarters of the Special Coordinator on 14 to 15 June 2000, focused on further deepening cooperation and understanding between the resident and non-resident United Nations agencies and representatives of the Palestinian Authority. Particularly noteworthy were recommendations that sought to strengthen practical partnerships between the United Nations system, the Palestinian Authority and its ministries and international donors in the occupied Palestinian territory.

II. Development assistance

4. As a result of the optimism generated by the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (A/48/486-S/26560, annex) in 1993, the occupied Palestinian territory became one of the largest recipients of development assistance in the world in per capita terms. Donor disbursements averaged about US$ 200 per person per year during the 1994-1998 period, excluding Palestinians in East Jerusalem. The United Nations presence in the occupied Palestinian territory increased from three organizations in 1993 to 13 in 1999. In addition, 12 organizations of the United Nations system are providing technical assistance and expertise to the Palestinian Authority.

5. According to figures provided by the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the total amount of funds disbursed by a total of 48 donors over the 1993-1999 period was just over US$ 2.75 billion. During the period 1994-1995, total donor commitments amounted to US$ 1.41 billion and disbursements to US$ 900.5 million. That trend continued through 1996, when commitments amounted to US$ 789.9 and disbursements to US$ 511.6 million. Over the three-year period from 1997 to 1999, however, a general trend of decline has been noted. Commitments have fallen yearly, declining from US$ 789.9 million in 1996 to US$ 546.8 million in 1999. Disbursements have fallen from US$ 511.6 million in 1996 to US$ 513 million in 1997, US$ 409.2 in 1998 and US$ 417.1 in 1999. The bulk of the disbursements, just under 90 per cent, has been in the form of grant aid, while the remainder was in loans. The World Bank is the largest of the eight loan creditors, and accounted for almost 30 per cent of all loan disbursements in 1999 and for just under 58 per cent over the 1993-1999 period.

6. In spite of the fact that the occupied Palestinian territory remains one of the largest recipients of international development assistance, it is nonetheless of concern that the past several years have seen a continuing decline in donor commitments and disbursements. No single factor can be identified as the principal cause of the overall decline, or for the significant decline in disbursements for public investment. Each donor's disbursements are influenced by numerous circumstances, many of which are unique to the particular donor.

7. The Tripartite Action Plan of 1999, a document drawn up in order to define understandings reached on the part of the international donor community, the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel, lists the following underlying reasons for this decline, as cited by donors, in order of importance: (a) the frequent shifts in the peace process and delays in the implementation of signed agreements over the years which have engendered an atmosphere of uncertainty; (b) the transition to an increasing number of economic development projects, which necessarily involves the preparation, appraisal and coordination of more complex projects with longer time horizons for implementation; (c) internal difficulties in donor countries that result in commitment and disbursement delays; (d) conflicts or natural disasters in other parts of the world which make strong claims on limited donor resources; (e) difficulties of consensus building between donors and Palestinian stakeholders; (f) growing pains of the nascent Palestinian governance system; and (g) complex Israeli measures governing permits for roads, water projects, industrial estate development and physical planning.

III. Palestinian Development Plan

8. The Palestinian Authority had presented the Palestinian Development Plan for the period 1998-2000, its first three-year rolling plan for capital investment, at the Consultative Group meeting in Paris on 14 and 15 December 1997. The Palestinian Development Plan laid out the goals, strategies, plans and policies for, and obstacles to the Palestinian development process. The document listed the programme areas and projects which the Palestinian Authority designated to be of the highest priority for socio-economic development. The total combined value of the over 600 projects listed in the Palestinian Development Plan, divided into four priority sectors, was approximately US$ 3.5 billion, or approximately US$ 1.2 billion a year.

9. The signing of the Wye River Memorandum on 23 October 1998 was followed by a ministerial meeting in Washington, D.C., on 30 November 1998, commemorating the five-year pledge made in 1993 by the international donor community to support the Palestinian people in their development efforts and needs. A new pledge for the following five years, of approximately US$ 3.3 billion in grants to further support development efforts in the Palestinian territories, was also made at that meeting.

10. Although a three-year plan (1999-2001) was initially envisaged as a follow-up to the 1997 document, it was decided that a five-year plan needed to be considered and projections made for the support being pledged. The Palestinian Development Plan 1999-2003 is a comprehensive document, comprised of the following sections:

- Political, economic and social developments (1993-1998);
- Macroeconomic framework for medium-term development planning (1999-2003);

- Resource framework for the Palestinian Development Plan (1999-2003);
- General framework of the Palestinian Development Plan (1999-2003);
- Palestinian Development Plan: the preparation process
- The Palestinian Development Plan investment programme: sector priorities, implementation and follow-up;
- Palestinian Development Plan programmes and projects.

11. Due to the planning cycle that was already in progress at the time, the Palestinian Development Plan for 1999-2003 is a hybrid of detailed programmes and projects for three years (2000-2001) and future projections for the remaining two years (2002-2003). This would provide the initial planning scope foreseen for the sectors and provide a basis for planning activities in the subsequent comprehensive five-year plan (2000-2004), which will be available in mid-2000.

12. The Palestinian Development Plan represents the Palestinian Authority's willingness and ability to take control of its own development process, with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation as its main planning body, and is a highly significant step forward in terms of Palestinian development planning capacity. The international community now has a greater opportunity to respond to these efforts in an equally constructive manner, basing assistance and interventions on the real needs and strategies carefully determined and set forth by the Palestinian Authority. This will allow the Palestinian development process to move into a phase of rational and coherent development based on the present realities. The Palestinian Development Plan was reinforced this year by the publication of the One-Year Action Plan for the year 2000. This document represents yet another step towards rationalizing the development process, as it provides the "priorities within the priorities" for the year at hand. Needs will outweigh resources in Palestinian development for many years to come. This Palestinian Development Plan and the accompanying Action Plan were created to allow for concentration on priority areas of development, for increased coordination and for coherent geographic coverage, according to strategies developed within the framework of available resources.

13. Both external and domestic challenges to the development process are identified in the Palestinian Development Plan. External constraints include the absence of freedom of movement between the West Bank and Gaza, the absence of an operational sea port and until recently of an airport; non-tariff barriers; the restrictions on freedom of movement and employment; and import/export restrictions. The Palestinian Development Plan also emphasizes that the absence of natural resources, neglected infrastructure and the limitations of a developing administration present the greatest challenges domestically. The Palestinian Development Plan takes these constraints into consideration and proposes alternative strategies in the event of certain constraints continuing or worsening.

14. Addressing and overcoming the problems and constraints facing the Palestinian development process require setting clear goals and objectives, and developing policies to be followed on the national, sectoral and subsectoral levels, as well as through the different ministries and institutions. The process also requires the identification of the priorities on which to concentrate in order to most effectively face the challenges standing in the way of the development process. In view of the difficulties and constraints being faced, the Palestinian Authority aspires to realize the following four major goals during the time span of the current five-year development plan: economic growth and employment generation; rural revival and development; improving social conditions/human resources development; and development of financial institutions and more effective macroeconomic policies.

15. The Palestinian Development Plan was formulated through a detailed planning process under the leadership of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation that involved all sectors and ministries and an active network of focal points. The Palestinian Authority has received assistance from several international partners, including the United Nations system. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Bretton Woods institutions provide widespread support, including at the macro-level, to the Palestinian Authority, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Finance in particular. Technical advisors and institutional support have been made available for long-term periods by UNDP. The World Bank is currently applying the methodology of its

comprehensive development framework to support strategic planning in several sectors.

16. More than 25 United Nations entities have provided development assistance during the past year. In line with the request of the Palestinian Authority, assistance was directed to the following areas: advocacy and awareness-raising, policy and strategy advice, planning and programming, transferring of know-how, lessons from developing countries, resource mobilization, facilitation to coordination and the funding and implementation of development projects.

17. Many of the United Nations specialized agencies have contributed expertise to the Palestinian Authority to help with sectoral policies and strategies, needs assessments and programme formulation. Sectoral plans have been completed for health, education and agriculture. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) expertise, together with UNDP support and financing from the Government of the Netherlands, assisted the Ministry of Agriculture for its plan for 2001-2005. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has contributed to the education sectoral plans and has been requested to provide further support. For health, several agencies, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have provided support in general or in specialized areas. UNICEF's collaboration with the Palestinian Authority in formulating its new programme for the Palestinian people has impacted on Palestinian Authority policies and programmes. UNFPA is currently conducting its country population assessment with the Palestinian Authority, as a key preliminary step for its future programme cooperation. This process is an integral part of the Palestinian Authority's policy-making and planning. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) have advised on employment and enterprise development strategy. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) have advised on trade issues. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has provided advice on civil aviation development, and recently, the Palestinian Authority requested further help from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to assist in planning the new port in Gaza. The United Nations development system has therefore used its comparative expertise to help improve the Palestinian Authority's capacity and methods for planning, and to help assess unmet needs.

18. The total amount of funds required for 1999 in the Palestinian Development Plan was US$ 720 million. Overall commitments for development activities for 1999 amounted to US$ 546.8 million, down from US$ 665.9 million in 1998, reflecting a shortfall of US$ 173.2 million. Actual disbursements amounted to US$ 417.1 million as of the fourth quarter of 1999. The amount of funds disbursed represented, about 58 per cent of the needs identified in the Palestinian Development Plan. The respective allocation of the total disbursement by category was as follows: public investment, 46 per cent; technical assistance, 25 per cent; private investment promotion, 7 per cent; in kind, 3 per cent; equipment, 2 per cent; budgetary assistance, 1 per cent; and employment generation, 1 per cent. This demonstrates the clear shift from the need for budget support to the financing of development projects. It is hoped that in future a clearer understanding of the Palestinian Development Plan by donors will result in broader and more appropriately targeted development assistance.

19. In order to address these priorities in a systematic way, the Palestinian Authority has tried to reflect public needs in terms of the four broad sectoral priorities which remain the same as in the first Palestinian Development Plan, as described below.

A. Infrastructure and natural resource management

20. This sector encompasses water and sanitation, housing, roads and transportation, sea and air ports and other general infrastructure projects. Infrastructure and related services underpin development in all sectors, and have a significant impact on popular perceptions of hardship or improvement in living conditions. Almost half of the total Palestinian Development Plan budget (48 per cent) is allocated to this sector for the five-year Palestinian Development Plan period. Infrastructure remains a top priority sector as years of neglect during the occupation of Palestinian territory have left a crumbling system. Although significant advances have been made in this sector, serious deficiencies remain in a number of areas. The Palestinian Development Plan identifies water and waste-water as the first priority

within this sector, and dedicates nearly 44 per cent of the sector budget to these areas.

21. Since the importance of road transport has increased significantly over the past few years and in view of the very poor condition of the roads in the occupied Palestinian territory, construction, expansion and rehabilitation programmes are given high priority in the Palestinian Development Plan. This subsector is virtually unsupported financially by the international donor community. In the third priority subsector of energy, attention is primarily focused on rural areas that do not have access to electricity. Solid waste disposal, another priority subsector, is also considerably underfunded. In the strategic and national projects subsector, the focus has been on developing the harbour, airport and safe passage, which are priorities at the national level.

22. The total budget for the entire sector for 1999 is US$ 416.3 million. The water and sanitation subsector is considered the most pressing priority within this sector. The Palestinian Development Plan lists 20 projects for this subsector, covering the areas of water supply, sewerage and water resources at a total cost of US$ 250.2 million. The costs of transportation and national projects are US$ 76.3 million and US$ 33.8 million, respectively. The budgets for the remaining six subsectors total approximately US$ 56 million.

23. In the water and sanitation subsector, total disbursements in 1999 amounted to US$ 111.7 million. Disbursements for transportation projects amounted to a total of approximately US$ 18 million and for all other subsectors approximately US$ 31 million, bringing the total disbursements for this sector in 1999 to US$ 160.7 million. Consequently, only 38 per cent of the requirements identified in the Palestinian Development Plan was met, which represents a serious hindrance to the progress of development in the occupied Palestinian territory.

24. During the reporting period, 11 United Nations agencies were active in the infrastructure and resource management sector. The largest United Nations contributors to this sector were UNDP and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Each was active in the priority subsector of sewerage and drinking water. UNDP began work on a sewage water system for the Khan Younis area in Gaza and made substantial progress on the Jericho water system. Meanwhile, UNRWA's environmental health services provided improvements to the sewerage, drainage and water supply systems of the refugee camp population as part of its peace implementation programme. WHO was also active in this subsector, with a contribution from the European Commission Humanitarian Assistance Office (ECHO), allowing for the implementation of a project aimed at the rehabilitation and protection of existing water sources (springs and wells).

25. UNDP's other contributions to this sector include environmental conservation as part of a regional effort to preserve agro-biodiversity and the reclamation of degraded rangelands. UNRWA was also active in improving the system of solid waste disposal, and in the rehabilitation of shelters in refugee camps. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has been active in water, irrigation and natural resources through its Ein El-Sultan Irrigation Project and Participatory Natural Resource Management Programme. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been involved in this sector through projects designed to strengthen science and technology infrastructure and radiation safety infrastructure. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is currently implementing activities related to the establishment of a Transmission Control Unit in the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, and by providing necessary elements to the functioning of the Palestine News Agency (WAFA). United Nations Volunteers (UNV) activities included urban planning assistance for the preparation of detailed area plans of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) contribution involved sponsoring the participation of Palestinian Authority representatives in six regional workshops on environmental issues. Within the national projects subsector, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) is currently providing technical assistance for the establishment of a maritime administration for the Palestinian Authority project. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has prepared a project to develop the Palestinian postal system, which is awaiting funding.

26. The Action Plan for 2000 provides a ranking of projects for the year according to national priority. Out of the top 50 projects, water and sanitation account for 17 projects, transportation (primarily roads) for 23 projects and other activities in this sector for seven projects. Coordinated efforts need be made to better cover the resource requirements of this sector, which is

considered essential to the overall quality of life of the Palestinian population.

B. Institutional capacity-building

27. Institutional capacity-building has been of central importance since the Palestinian Authority came into being and assumed responsibility over the public sector, which serves approximately 3 million people. The objective in this sector is to strengthen the administrative management capacity of Palestinian ministries and numerous public institutions and to devise the legal and regulatory framework within which the Palestinian Authority's executive, legislative and judicial bodies carry out their responsibilities. Approximately 9 per cent of the total Palestinian Development Plan budget is allocated to this sector.

28. The priority area in this sector is institutional development. The Palestinian Development Plan emphasizes the necessity of moving away from reliance on foreign expertise in identifying and resolving development issues in order to foster sustainability in development planning and daily functioning. Technical assistance to raise the capacity of Palestinian Authority civil servants and their institutions is encouraged. Therefore, training, strengthening institutions with the range of equipment necessary for effective functioning and technical assistance programmes that work hand-in-hand with Palestinian Authority counterparts to ensure dissemination of knowledge and expertise are priorities.

29. Other priorities within this sector include strengthening of the legal and regulatory framework and democracy development. Enhancing the legal and regulatory environment and systems is key to encouraging private sector-led growth of the economy, while also encouraging the continued support of donors. A transparent and appropriate legal and regulatory framework is crucial if institutions are to operate effectively. In addition, the Palestinian Development Plan emphasizes the necessity of establishing a stable democratic government. It calls for the fundamental elements of democracy to be widely disseminated and for foundations to be built to maintain its sustainability.

30. Although commitments of nearly US$ 100 million were made for institutional development, US$ 37.6 million was actually disbursed, nearly reaching the US$41 million that was budgeted for this subsector in the Palestinian Development Plan for 1999. The area of democracy development was also well covered, with disbursements of approximately US$ 7 million. However, in the subsectors of legal and regulatory framework and of the police, disbursements amounted to only US$ 3 and US$ 2 million, respectively.

31. Through its broad-sweeping UNICEF/Palestinian Authority master plan of operations for Palestinian children and women, UNICEF has implemented many capacity-building and technical assistance activities, including training and/or material support to the Ministries of Health, Education, Social Services and Justice, local NGOs, Al-Quds University and others. Training covered the areas of child health, child development, parenting, education, the Palestinian Child Rights Charter and the Convention of the Rights of the Child. UNDP is involved in technical assistance/capacity-building on several levels, including in poverty alleviation with the Ministry of Planning, issues concerning the disabled with the Ministry of Health and law and gender policy with the Palestinian Legislative Council. Its activities also included working closely with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance, among others. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been engaged in providing material and technical assistance towards strengthening institutions whose work relates to the rule of law in general and human rights in particular. UNFPA and WHO have been working together in strengthening the technical and human resource capabilities of the Ministry of Health, NGOs and the primary health care sector on reproductive health. This has included guidelines and protocol for reproductive health services, training for physicians and nurses and awareness-raising. WHO has also been providing technical assistance and training with the Ministry of Health for water quality monitoring and disease control (brucellosis control programme). UNRWA has provided a wide range of training and technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and local NGOs. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has been working with NGOs and donors in order to develop the women in development/gender in development sector, and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), UNCTAD and UNDP have

carried out a joint training programme in international commercial diplomacy.

32. The ILO's technical cooperation programme is aimed at building the human and institutional capacities of different institutions in fields of its competence, such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Labour, among others. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)/Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention has been active in three priority areas through its multisectoral drug control assistance to the Palestinian Authority project: legal and institutional framework concerning drug control, capacity-building amongst law enforcement agencies and capacity-building in the social affairs and health sectors. UNV provided technical assistance in urban planning to several different municipalities, and ITU provided training for engineers and technicians from the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and to the staff of WAFA. FAO is currently implementing a capacity-building project in the areas of agricultural policy analysis and planning. IAEA has two ongoing projects for human resource and manpower development. ESCWA activities have included training and advisory activities in the production, use and dissemination of statistics, particularly gender-related statistics, training programmes organized for the Palestine Monetary Authorities and for the Palestinian Planning Unit, and assistance to the Minister of Social Affairs in the preparation of a report on the advancement of women in the occupied Palestinian territory.

33. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been very active in continuing its support to the Palestinian Authority in the preparation of legislation affecting human rights and in its work towards establishing a national plan of action for human rights. UNDP works with the Women's Unit of the Palestinian Legislative Council in order to bring gender issues to the forefront of legislative efforts. It also supports the Ministry of Justice and is funding the production of a legal journal. IMO is assisting the Department of Transport in Gaza in drawing up draft maritime legislation. Both the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNDCP have offered training for the Palestinian police. The Office offers training primarily in the areas of human rights and rule of law, while UNDCP has provided training in law enforcement surrounding drug control. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator supports coordination and donor assistance for the establishment of a police academy, with cost-sharing provided by the Government of Denmark. At the request of the Palestinian Authority, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has drafted proposals for four projects to provide technical assistance in the areas of public expenditure management, aid management and revenue administration. Funding is currently being sought for these projects.

34. In the areas of institutional development and democracy development, the funding needs in the Palestinian Development Plan were well covered in 1999. However, a preliminary analysis indicates that actual disbursement was not in line with the Palestinian Development Plan. While one third of the US$ 41.3 million in the budget in the Palestinian Development Plan for institutional development was for public building projects only, an insignificant portion of the US$ 37.6 million disbursed was for this purpose. In the other crucial areas of legal and regulatory framework and of the police, the funds fell well short of the needs in 1999. Given the importance of these subsectors at this stage of the development process, these should be considered as priorities in 2000. Nearly all United Nations agencies have provided technical assistance in some sort to institutional development, in line with the Palestinian Authority priority of training and in-depth building of local expertise. The abundance of agencies working in this subsector illustrates the urgent need for more effective coordination in order for the Palestinian Authority and all agencies involved to benefit from the various activities that are being undertaken to the largest extent possible.

35. According to the Action Plan for 2000 and in line with the shortfall mentioned above, priority projects include, first and foremost, a variety of building construction projects. In addition, more capacity-building and human resource development projects are emphasized. The Palestinian Development Plan budget for this entire subsector in 2000 is US$ 51 million. Thus institutional development remains a priority in 2000 in order to continue on the momentum of the technical assistance provided to date and to gain ground on the construction and rehabilitation of needed public buildings. Due to the need to reinforce institutions which facilitate the implementation of the rule of law and to strengthen the regulatory framework

in 1999 and given that the resources needed for these increase significantly in 2000, these areas also remain a priority, especially considering the importance of a legal and regulatory framework needed to support the institutional structures currently being put into place.

C. Human resources and social development

36. This sector is wide-ranging, covering such crucial subsectors as health, education, housing, social welfare, women and human rights. The majority of United Nations agencies are working in at least one area within this sector. The importance of the various subsectors cannot be overstated, as they are key to achieving development, democratization and stability. Nearly 25 per cent of the Palestinian Development Plan budget is allocated to this sector over the five-year period.

37. The Palestinian Authority considers education to be the top priority in this sector. Deteriorated and inadequate facilities are the main problems faced by the education system, particularly given the six per cent annual increase in student population. Eighty per cent of schools in Gaza and 20 per cent in the West Bank are still operating on double-shifts and in some cases in Gaza even on triple shifts. The construction of new schools is essential to allow for an increase in the number of school hours per child and to reduce class size. Over the first three years of the Palestinian Development Plan, about 53 per cent (US$117 million) of the education subsector budget has been allocated to primary and secondary education for rehabilitation or new construction of infrastructure, excluding vocational secondary education. Other elements considered crucial to raising the standard of education include equipment and facilities, as well as capacity-building through teacher training and curriculum development.

38. The second priority in this sector is health. Unlike education, many forms of health services can be provided by the private sector. Therefore, the priority in this subsector is on primary health care to ensure that basic services are available to all communities in all governorates, with an emphasis on reaching remote and rural communities. The third priority subsector is refugee camps. Refugee camps are home to 590,000 Palestinians who are in need of substantial assistance. Overcrowding and poor sanitary and health conditions in most camps call for intensive upgrading and rehabilitation on an urgent basis. The fourth priority subsector covers detainees and ex-detainees. The Palestinian Authority recognizes the importance of assisting and reintegrating the large number of ex-prisoners and their families. Many are suffering physical, mental and economic problems even years after their release. Many require specialized care, training and assistance to facilitate their reintegration into society. Consequently, about 2 per cent of the budget for this sector is allocated to this subsector over the five-year period.

39. The Palestinian Development Plan clearly emphasises the urgent need for support for education. Out of the total allocation of US$ 144.5 million for the sector, the Palestinian Development Plan budgeted nearly US$ 62 million for education in 1999, the bulk of which (approximately 70 per cent) is dedicated to the building of schools or rehabilitation of existing schools, with the remainder going to educational capacity-building and vocational training. In 1999, US$ 34.9 million was disbursed for the education subsector. Approximately US$ 20.5 million was spent on school construction or rehabilitation, while the balance covered primarily technical assistance projects. Health is the other major priority within this sector, for which the Palestinian Development Plan budgeted US$ 38.3 million for 1999. The bulk of this budget was directed towards construction of clinics and hospitals, while one-fourth of the budget was for health capacity-building. US$ 34.8 were disbursed in the health subsector, of which US$ 6.2 million was for construction or rehabilitation of health structures and the remainder for equipment and technical assistance. Allocation for other areas in this sector, were as follows: refugees: US$ 14.9 million; humanitarian aid: US$ 8.3 million; detainees and ex-detainees: US$ 4.5 million; women: US$ 5.6 million; human rights and civil society: US$ 500,000; youth: US$ 3.6 million; and culture: US$ 6.8 million. US$ 4 million was disbursed for humanitarian assistance approximately US$ 1 million each for detainees and ex-detainees, youth and women. Disbursement figures are not currently available for the areas of human rights, refugees or culture. The total disbursements for this sector thus amounted to approximately US$ 76.7 million.

40. In the education subsector, UNRWA's 264 elementary and secondary schools accommodated

223,258 pupils in the 1999/2000 school year, an increase of 11,422 over the previous year. Although a certain amount of construction and upgrading of UNRWA schools took place, lack of funds and sites for school construction has meant that many schools continue to be accommodated in unsatisfactory rented premises and suffer from overcrowding and lack of educational facilities. UNRWA also runs four vocational and technical training centres, with a total of 2,036 trainees. Merit-based scholarships were awarded to 253 refugee students to universities in the region. Among its various activities, UNICEF has provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Education in the establishment of the five-year Educational Plan for Palestine, as well as in other areas. The ILO headed a project for the establishment of the Sheikh Khalifa Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the disabled. The UNESCO/Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator programme in favour of the Palestinian People (PAPP) have been engaged in a range of rehabilitation and technical assistance activities relevant to the education system, including the establishment of the curriculum development centre, school rehabilitation projects, provision of teaching materials and policy analysis of the Ministry of Education's five-year plan.

41. In the area of health, WHO has been working closely with the Ministry of Health on a variety of levels, including the Palestinian essential drugs programme, immunization, monitoring of water quality, disease control and provision of laboratory equipment and training. In addition, WHO and UNFPA have been working intensively on the integration of reproductive health services into primary health care. UNRWA is the largest United Nations contributor to the health sector in the occupied Palestinian territory (US$ 23 million in 1999), operating 51 primary health-care facilities, which handled approximately 3.5 million patient visits in 1999. Rehabilitation services were provided through 13 physiotherapy clinics and six maternity units, which were integrated within its centres in Gaza. UNRWA provided secondary health care for the refugee population through special arrangements with various hospitals, or through the Agency's 43-bed Qalquilia hospital in the West Bank. It continued its involvement in the project for the 232-bed European Gaza Hospital, which should begin treating out-patients in July 2000 and in-patients in October 2000, and should be fully operational in January 2001. UNRWA's environmental health projects included improvements to sewerage, drainage and water supply systems and solid waste disposal. Among its many health-related activities, UNICEF continued its support for the national immunization campaign for school children, as well as for the Ministry of Health's school health promotion project, and for women's health and nutrition projects, and provided a range of training and technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and local NGOs. The UNDCP drug control assistance project provided training to health and social workers concerning drug abuse and demand reduction. UNDP assisted the Ministry of Health in developing programmes related to prevention and early detection of disabilities.

42. UNRWA has been very active in the relief and social services sector, including material and financial assistance to destitute families, the registration of refugees, works in refugee camps and the sponsorship of various community centres. The World Food Programme (WFP) has been active in its social safety net scheme, in support to small-scale farmers and fishermen and in offering financial support to NGOs working in the social sector. UNDP has been working with the Palestinian Authority to develop policies and practices leading to poverty alleviation, and supported the publication of the second *Human Development Report* covering 1998-1999. The ILO was involved in implementing projects of rehabilitation and income generation for ex-detainees and for disabled people.

43. In the area of human rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has begun intensive work with six ministries towards the formulation of a national plan of action for human rights, and has continued to offer material and technical assistance for strengthening institutions whose work relates to the rule of law and human rights. UNICEF has been involved in a variety of advocacy activities, including the development of the Children's Rights Charter and training of professionals on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

44. UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNDP and ESCWA have all been active in the area of women/gender. UNIFEM is implementing three projects designed to develop women's entrepreneurship, promote women in development and establish plans for the advancement of women, among other related objectives. As part of its activities geared towards reproductive health, UNFPA has been involved in the support of women's centres providing different types of counselling, raising

awareness of gender issues and in the revision of the women's health and health education component of the national strategic health plan (1999-2003). UNDP continues advocating gender equality through, among other things, its promotion of equal opportunities in the civil service. ESCWA has continued support of the Gender Statistics Unit and provided technical assistance to the Palestinian Authority in the preparation of the national report on the advancement of women in the Palestinian territories in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs. IFAD, as part of its relief and development programme, has been providing training to women through its business service centre and financing income-generating activities for groups of women. UNDP, through its *Sharek* project, is involved in empowering young people to participate in and contribute to the development of Palestinian society. UNV has also placed volunteers in the youth and community participatory development sector.

45. The Palestinian Development Plan budgets for construction and rehabilitation in both the education and health subsectors have increased significantly over the years and rank very highly in the Action Plan for 2000. Both the Action Plan for 2000 and the Palestinian Development Plan budget for 2000 reflect significant increases in the budgets needed for education and health, indicating their importance for overall development efforts. In addition, the six other subsectors of this area, which were all undercovered in 1999, are areas warranting increased support for a successful development process.

D. Productive sectors

46. The productive sectors include industry, tourism, agriculture and income-generating activities, to a large extent involving the private sector. Private sector activity has been identified by the Palestinian Authority and donors as the potential engine to drive the Palestinian economy. Public support to economic sectors is vital for the private enterprise to do its share in developing the Palestinian economy. Hence, the Palestinian Authority wishes to concentrate on efforts to provide an enabling environment for the private sector to start up activities, while financial needs of private sector activities themselves will be obtained through loans. Approximately 17 per cent or about US$ 765 million of the total PDP budget is allocated for productive sector development over the five-year period. The primary goal in the productive sector is to work towards industrialization. However, since industrialization will require necessary infrastructure, independence of movement and trade to become a dependable economic source and years to achieve an effective productive capacity, agriculture will in the meantime be the leading productive sector.

47. Historically, agriculture has been the principal source of economic activity for Palestinians. In recent years, more efficient and effective means of production have been introduced and some major advances have been made. These technologies now need to be reinforced and extended in order to maximize effectiveness and benefits in addition to the need to reclaim land, which has been neglected during many years of occupation, primarily for agricultural use. Food security is also a priority area as otherwise, the Palestinian population would be dependent on Israel for its basic food needs. Thus, agriculture is considered the first priority in this sector followed by industry, which will become the first priority once the framework for its full implementation is realized and agriculture has become a more stable subsector.

48. Within the industrial subsector, priority is placed on the development of industrial estates which are expected to create approximately 20,000 new job opportunities each. Tourism will always be an important potential contributor to economic growth. However, until freedom of movement to and from the West Bank and Gaza governorates is realized and visitors can visit all Palestinian areas without hindrances, this subsector will continue to face problems. Nonetheless, the infrastructure and framework for a strong tourism subsector can be achieved in the coming few years in anticipation of an environment more conducive to tourism. This is also the case for the preservation of archaeological sites within this subsector.

49. The Palestinian Development Plan sets the needs for 1999 in this sector as follows: agriculture: US$ 7.5 million; industrial development: US$ 8 million; tourism and archaeology: US$ 69.4 million; other: US$ 12.8 million. As presented in the Palestinian Development Plan, the first priority is to develop quickly in the area of agriculture, while preparing the terrain for an increase in industrial activities over the next 5 years. Accordingly, the Palestinian Development Plan budgets for agriculture increase dramatically over the 1999 budget during the period of 2000–2001,

dropping off again in 2002-2003. Industrial development (which includes small and medium enterprises) budgets increase gradually over the five-year period, from US$ 8 million in 1999 to US$ 79 million in 2003. The Palestinian Development Plan budget for tourism and archaeology was high for 1999, due primarily to Bethlehem 2000, which represented a pressing priority in 1999. The overall budget for this sector was US$ 97.7 million. Disbursements for agriculture amounted to US$ 8 million for tourism and archaeology US$ 18 million, for industrial development US$ 2 million and for the private sector US$ 6 million: a total of US$ 34 million for all the subsectors.

50. United Nations involvement in this sector covers the three main priority areas of agriculture, industry and tourism. UNWRA continued to expand its income generation programmes aimed at creating job opportunities and developing enterprise activity by providing microfinance credit to small enterprises. This programme has grown to be the largest supplier of financial services to the microenterprise sector in the occupied Palestinian territory. UNIDO is involved in establishing a project entitled "UNIDO support programme to Palestinian industry" which is in the preparatory phase and includes a study tour to Tunisia for Ministry of Industry representatives and the recruitment of national experts. The programme will include the setting up of an industrial upgrading programme on a pilot basis, which will consist of various activities designed to build capacity in the Ministry of Industry and in the private sector. ITC has sponsored the participation of the Palestine Trade Centre in four buyers/sellers meetings in the region, as part of its regional programme. ITC also carried out a mission to the Palestinian areas in March 2000 in order to lay the groundwork for a project focusing on craft enterprise development and commercialization of artisanal products. A project document is being finalized and priority areas for technical cooperation in this and other areas have been identified. Another mission designed to further assess the needs and potentials of the Palestinian business community was carried out in May 2000.

51. A joint training programme in commercial diplomacy was organized together by UNITAR/UNCTAD/UNDP for the Palestinian Authority. This programme was divided into three sessions and one high-level symposium. UNIFEM continued its project with the Ministry of Social Affairs, entitled "Development of women's entrepreneurship on Gaza (1997-2000)". The objectives of this project include increasing women's participation in the private sector and ensuring higher income levels. UNCTAD has continued to support a variety of technical cooperation activities during the project period, including a feasibility study concerning an industrial estate in Nablus; strengthening trade efficiency in a variety of areas, the above-mentioned training in commercial diplomacy and support to enterprise development. The ILO was engaged in several projects, including its Palestinian employment programme.

52. ESCWA conducted a training programme in November 1999 on agricultural issues and policies with the Palestinian Planning Unit. Two project documents and two proposals have been developed for this subsector. IAEA continued its medfly control project. WFP has continued its support of small-scale farmers in Gaza, and also supported a land reclamation project, through Catholic Relief Services, with 720 participating families. Among other related activities, UNDP continued its activities involving the reclamation of degraded rangelands, which resulted in the rehabilitation of agricultural land and generated work for thousands of unemployed Palestinians. IFAD continued supporting a range of agricultural activities through its relief and development programme and its participatory natural resource management programme. FAO continued its "Capacity-building in agricultural policy analysis and planning" project, and is planning another four related projects pending the receipt of necessary funding.

53. UNV has begun work on establishing a corps of archaeological cultural heritage volunteers, with the recruitment of one national and one international architect. UNESCO headed the emergency action plan for Bethlehem 2000, opening the way for the development of pilgrimages and cultural tourism in Palestine. In addition, UNESCO's PAPP projects included restoration of mosaics and training in cultural heritage preservation. UNEP held a variety of regional workshops, through its Regional Office for West Asia, on trade and tourism, in which representatives of the Palestinian Authority participated.

54. In 1999, disbursements in the productive sector amounted to US$ 33 million, compared to the requirement of US$ 97.7. Agriculture, which had a budget of US$ 7.5 million in the Palestinian

Development Plan, was relatively well covered with disbursements of approximately US$ 7 million. Disbursements for industrial development at US$ 2 million, fell well short of the Palestinian Development Plan budget of more than US$ 8 million. Tourism and archaeology, while accounting for the largest disbursement in this sector by far (US$ 18 million) still fell far short of the target budget of US$ 69.4 million. Private sector disbursements, falling under the Palestinian Development Plan category of "Other support projects", received US$ 6 million, compared to US$ 12.8 million budgeted for this category.

IV. Conclusion

55. The present report has highlighted the evolution of assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory and its people from both United Nations and other sources, taking note of the trends and how priority needs are being addressed. In general, progress has continued to be made in meeting some of the urgent and most significant priorities that confront the Palestinian Authority and people. Additional support is necessary to address basic human needs. Technical and financial support is also required to improve the physical environment and infrastructure, including water, energy and transportation. Institutions and human resources need to be strengthened further to cope with these challenges. The Palestinian Authority, with some support from the United Nations and other international partners, has undertaken institutional, economic and financial reforms, which would also benefit from assistance to ensure their implementation and impact.

56. The planning processes and plans of the Palestinian Authority have become more effective in the past three years and this has brought greater clarity on the unmet needs and has helped to justify the strategic priorities. Institutional mechanisms which have been established to facilitate dialogue and coordination between the Palestinian Authority and donors are working well and are supported by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator, in collaboration with the World Bank and other United Nations specialized agencies.

57. During the past year, United Nations organizations and specialised agencies have continued to play a significant and special role in support of the Palestinian people. The United Nations development system has continued to work as a complement and supplement to other partners in the international community and has implemented sizeable multilateral and bilateral assistance. There are increasing initiatives among United Nations bodies to coordinate programmes of activity. UNRWA and UNDP, respectively, administer special, large-scale programmes, as mandated. The Bretton Woods institutions also play specially effective roles. Other funds and programmes and many specialized agencies of the United Nations system are making important contributions, in a responsive and innovative way, to the socio-economic development priorities.

58. It is evident that many needs have been met and that due largely to the strengthening of the Palestinian Authority's capacities for planning and policy making, the Palestinian Development Plan has been increasingly employed to influence the direction of donor assistance. However, lack of sufficient assistance in certain priority sectors/subsectors has left the planned development process lagging in crucial areas. In the process of development cooperation, the coverage of priority needs should continue to be examined: in monetary terms, in terms of whether or not the funds available are being well targeted to the real needs and priorities spelled out by the Palestinian Authority and in terms of information exchange and cooperation between donors, to foster complementarity and avoid overlap. Therefore, continued coordination between the Palestinian Authority and the donor community, and within the donor community itself, is vital if Palestinian development is to evolve and attain its intended objectives in a coherent and sustainable manner.

59. Progress in the development of the occupied Palestinian territory has been facilitated by the very considerable assistance provided by the international community with a total of approximately US$ 2.75 billion having been disbursed between 1993 and 1999. At the same time, I am concerned about the declining trend of both new commitments and disbursements for development cooperation in spite of the present special needs and the challenges that lie ahead. The Palestinian institutions and the Palestinian Development Plan serve as a reasonable framework for further international assistance and a sound basis for ongoing dialogue to guide future development collaboration. The circumstances, assumptions, and exigencies which affect the occupied Palestinian territory and people will

continue to evolve in the coming period. I call upon the international community to provide the necessary resources and to demonstrate flexibility in their support for the development programmes for the Palestinian people.

Annex I

Palestinian Development Plan: priority sectors

Infrastructure and natural resources management	Institutional capacity-building	Human resources and social development	Productive sectors
Water and waste water	Institutional development	Education	Agriculture
Transportation	Legal and regulatory	Health	Industry
Environment	Framework	Women	Tourism and archeological resources
Solid waste	Democracy development	Youth projects	Other support projects
Telecommunications and information systems	Police	Culture projects	
Energy		Human rights and civil society	
Housing		Humanitarian aid	
General infrastructure		Detainees and ex-detainees	
Strategic and national projects		Refugee camps	

Annex II

United Nations development system in the occupied Palestinian territory

	DESA	ESCWA	FAO	IAEA	IBRD	ICAO	IFAD	ILO	IMO	ITC	ITU	ODCCP	OHCHR	UNCTAD	UNDP	UNEP	UNESCO	UNFPA	UNICEF	UNIDO	UNIFEM	UNITAR	UNRWA	UNV	UPU	WFP	WHO	WTO
Sector 1. Infrastructure and natural resource development																												
Water and sanitation					x										x	x	x	x					x				x	
Environment	x	x			x										x	x	x			x			x				x	
General infrastructure	x			x	x										x		x	x					x	x	x			
Telecommunications		x									x				x													
Energy	x			x													x											
Transportation						x			x					x	x													
Sector 2. Institutional capacity-building																												
Institutional development and governance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x
Democracy, rule of law and human rights	x	x						x					x		x		x	x	x		x	x		x				
Police												x	x															

	DESA	ESCWA	FAO	IAEA	IBRD	ICAO	IFAD	ILO	IMO	ITC	ITU	ODCCP	OHCHR	UNCTAD	UNDP	UNEP	UNESCO	UNFPA	UNICEF	UNIDO	UNIFEM	UNITAR	UNRWA	UNV	UPU	WFP	WHO	WTO
Sector 3. Social sector																												
Education		x			x			x							x		x	x	x		x		x	x				
Health		x						x				x			x			x	x		x		x	x			x	
Women and gender	x	x	x				x	x					x		x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	
Children and youth	x	x					x	x				x	x		x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x			x	
Social protection								x							x				x				x				x	
Culture															x		x							x				
Humanitarian aid															x				x				x			x		
Sector 4. Productive sectors																												
Employment, industry and small enterprise	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x			x	x		x			x	x	x	x	x				
Trade and investment		x			x	x			x	x	x	x		x	x					x		x						x
Tourism and cultural heritage						x		x							x	x	x							x				
Agriculture		x	x				x								x											x		

Note: DESA – Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ODCCP – Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention
OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

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Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Advancement of women

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, which were adopted at the seminar organized by the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and hosted by the Namibian Government from 29 to 31 May 2000 in Windhoek (see annexes).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 87, 109 and 155 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Martin **Andjaba**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

* A/55/150.

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Annex I to the letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Windhoek Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group

Windhoek, 31 May 2000

In a world riven by war, women and men yearn for peace and are everywhere striving to resolve conflict and bring about peace, reconciliation and stability in their communities, their countries and through the United Nations and regional organizations.

United Nations peace operations have evolved from peacekeeping, in its traditional sense, towards multidimensional peace support operations. So far, women have been denied their full role in these efforts, both nationally and internationally, nor has the gender dimension in peace processes been adequately addressed.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of peace support operations, the principles of gender equity and equality must permeate the entire mission, at all levels, thus ensuring the participation of women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of the peace process, from peacekeeping, reconciliation and peace-building, towards a situation of political stability in which women and men play an equal part in the political, economic and social development of their country.

Having considered these matters in Windhoek at a seminar on mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peace support operations organized by the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat and hosted by the Government of Namibia from 29 to 31 May 2000, the seminar looked at practical ways in which the United Nations system and Members States can bring the aims set out above closer to realization. In that regard, the seminar recommends the Namibia Plan of Action and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that appropriate follow-up measures are taken to implement it, in consultation with Member States, and that periodic progress reviews are undertaken.

Annex II to the letter dated 12 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations

1. **Negotiations in Furtherance of a Ceasefire and/or Peace Agreements:**
   - Equal access and participation by women and men should be ensured in the area of conflict at all levels and stages of the peace process.
   - In negotiations for a ceasefire and/or peace agreements, women should be an integral part of the negotiating team and process. The negotiating team and/or facilitators should ensure that gender issues are placed on the agenda and that those issues are addressed fully in the agreement.

2. **Mandate**
   - The initial assessment mission for any peace support operation should include a senior adviser on gender mainstreaming.
   - The Secretary-General's initial report to the Security Council, based on the assessment mission, should include the issue of gender mainstreaming, and should propose adequate budgetary provisions.
   - Security Council resolutions setting up and extending peace support operations should incorporate a specific mandate on gender mainstreaming.
   - All mandates for peace support operations should refer to the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as other relevant international legal instruments.
   - Follow-on mechanisms should be established within the mission's mandate to carry over tasks to implement fully gender mainstreaming in the post-conflict reconstruction period.

3. **Leadership**
   - In accordance with the Secretary-General's target of 50 per cent women in managerial and decision-making positions, more determined efforts must be made to select and appoint female Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and senior field staff for peace support operations.
   - A comprehensive database with information specifically on female candidates with qualifications, both military and civilian, should be maintained.
   - In DPKO an Advisory Board should be set up, preferably with qualified external participation, to ensure that this database and existing lists of female candidates are given due consideration.
   - Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and senior mission personnel should receive an in-depth briefing on gender mainstreaming issues prior to deployment.

4. **Planning, Structure and Resources of Missions**
   - A gender affairs unit is crucial for effective gender mainstreaming and should be a standard component of all missions. It should be adequately funded and staffed at appropriate levels and should have direct access to senior decision-makers.

- The DPKO-led operational planning teams at UN Headquarters must include gender specialists and representatives of other UN agencies and organizations dealing with gender issues.
- All DPKO and DPA briefings to the Security Council, as well as formal and informal briefings to the General Assembly legislative bodies, Member States and other relevant bodies, should integrate gender issues related to that particular mission.
- There is a need for the financial authorities of the United Nations, particularly the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), to give priority to the funding of gender mainstreaming.
- Lessons learned from current and prior missions on gender should be incorporated at the planning stage of a new mission. To this end, the compilation of best practices on gender mainstreaming should be constantly updated.

5. Recruitment

- The United Nations must set an example by rapidly increasing the number of senior female civilian personnel in peace support operations in all relevant Headquarters departments, including DPKO, and in the field.
- Member States should be asked to increase the number of women in their military and civilian police forces who are qualified to serve in peace support operations at all levels, including the most senior. To this end, a stronger mechanism than the current *note verbale* to troop-contributing Nations should be developed. Requests to troop-contributing nations could be tailor-made to nations who are known to have suitable female staff, while other potential troop-contributing nations could be encouraged to develop longer-term strategies to increase the number and rank of female personnel in their respective forces.
- The terms of reference, including eligibility requirements, for all heads of mission components and their personnel should be reviewed and modified to facilitate the increased participation of women, and, depending on the outcome of that review, special measures should be taken to secure this goal.
- All agreements and individual contracts governing the assignment of personnel, including arrangements for United Nations Volunteers, should reflect the gender-related obligations and responsibilities of those personnel. In particular, the code of conduct should be addressed in all of these documents.

6. Training

- Troop-contributing nations, which are training military, police and civilian personnel specifically for their participation in peace support operations, should involve a higher percentage of women in that training.
- Gender issues should be mainstreamed throughout all regional and national training curricula and courses for peace support operations and particularly those sponsored directly by DPKO's Training Unit.
- In order to meet United Nations standards for behaviour, DPKO should provide gender awareness guidelines and materials so that Member States can incorporate these elements into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment. Such training should be enhanced by United Nations Training Assistance Teams and 'train-the-trainers' programmes.

- Obligatory induction training with regard to gender issues held upon arrival at mission areas should include the following:
  - code of conduct
  - culture, history and social norms of the host country
  - CEDAW
  - sexual harassment and sexual assault

7. Procedures

- DPKO should consider the gender mainstreaming mechanisms currently used by United Nations agencies and adapt an appropriate version for their field operations. DPKO directives should be amended to include gender mainstreaming.
- The reporting mechanisms between the field and Headquarters on gender mainstreaming need to be clarified.
- A post for a Senior Gender Adviser in DPKO, to serve as gender focal point for field missions, should be funded under the regular budget or the peacekeeping support account and filled as a matter of urgency.
- The terms of reference of the Senior Gender Adviser should ensure a proper interchange of information and experience between gender units in individual missions.
- The functions and roles of missions' gender units/advisers should be announced to all personnel.
- Standard Operating Procedures applying to all components of missions should to be developed on the issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability

- Accountability for all issues relating to gender mainstreaming at the field level should be at the highest level, vested in the Secretary-General's Special Representative, who should be assigned the responsibility of ensuring that gender mainstreaming is implemented in all areas and components of the mission.
- The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and other concerned legislative bodies should submit recommendations to the General Assembly promoting gender mainstreaming in peace operations.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the implementation of the United Nations gender mainstreaming objectives should be established at United Nations Headquarters and at peacekeeping missions, in consultation with the Division for the Advancement of Women.
- The current format of reporting, particularly with regard to situation reports and periodic reports of the Secretary-General, should include progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions.
- There should be periodic and end-of-mission evaluations, led by an independent external team, of the degree to which the United Nations gender mainstreaming approach and objectives have been integrated into all policies and activities of each peace support operation. The first studies should be on East Timor and Kosovo.
- Reporting mechanisms should be established to monitor the effects of the implementation of the peace agreement on the host country population from a gender perspective.

- Research should be encouraged on the short- and long-term effects of the gender dimension of peace support operations on the host country population. Such research should be designed to strengthen host country research capacity, in particular that of women researchers.

9. Public Awareness

- All possible means should be employed to increase public awareness of the importance of gender mainstreaming in peace support operations. In this connection, the media should play a significant and positive role.